

SBA NEWS RELEASE

PRESS OFFICE

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SBA NATIONAL MED Week BUSINESS AWARDS **GO TO FIRMS FROM NEW HAMPSHIRE, HAWAII**

WASHINGTON -- U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Administrator, Aida Alvarez, launched the start of Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week today by announcing her agency's selections for the two highest SBA honors given to minority business owners.

"As this nation moves to the 21st century, we must realize that we build a vibrant and lasting national economy one small business at a time," said Administrator Alvarez. "President Clinton, in issuing his proclamation for MED Week, reminds us that this is a time when we recognize and honor the extraordinary contributions of minority entrepreneurs and the strength they bring to our economy."

"For this reason, the SBA is especially pleased to focus the nation's attention on two minority-owned small businesses -- LANCAST, Inc. and PER, Inc. -- that easily qualify as role models in the quest for excellence. They richly deserve the honor and I congratulate the owners and their employees for earning this distinction."

The National Minority Small Business Person of the Year is **Hong Yu**, chairman and chief executive officer of **LANCAST, Inc.** of Nashua, New Hampshire. The agency's selection

for the **National 8(a) Graduate of the Year** is **PER, Inc.** of Honolulu, Hawaii headed by **Eric Soto**.

Mr. Yu, a native of Taiwan, used personal funds to start **LANCAST** in 1981 and has supervised its growth as a leader in the design, manufacture and marketing of products for local area networks, or LANS. Mr. Yu said a key factor in his ability to expand during those early years was an SBA guaranteed loan of \$100,000.

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The company originally incorporated as a supplier of electronic equipment for the cable and satellite industries. In 1990, Hong Yu invented a communications device which redefined the mission of the firm and set it on its present course. This development also placed the firm in a strong position to capitalize on what were then the emerging market opportunities in computer networking. LANCAST has posted profits in each year of operation and its current sales volume is \$25 million.

PER, Inc., a general contracting company, graduated from the 8(a) program in September 1996. The 8(a) program is the SBA's business development initiative that helps disadvantaged firms attain viability in the economic mainstream. There are more than 6,000 small businesses enrolled as participants.

According to Mr. Soto, the financial and developmental assistance extended to PER by the SBA made a significant contribution toward the success of the company. The firm has worked on many high-profile projects, including a major renovation of Hawaii's Straub Medical Center, which resulted in substantially lower utility costs. The company has also completed a number of hotel and military projects.

In addition to general contracting, PER is heavily involved with the installation of large-scale automatic fire sprinkler systems. This expansion came in the early '90s after Mr. Soto anticipated a change in Hawaii's economic climate and forecast a slow down in construction but an increase in sprinkler installation.

MED Week events are being held this week at several locations across the country and hundreds of minority entrepreneurs are gathered in Washington, D.C. for a four-day national business conference. The SBA awards will be presented during this conference.

Winners list

1998 Minority Enterprise Development Week

U.S. Small Business Administration

National 8(a) Graduate of the Year

PER, Inc.

ERIC SOTO - PRESIDENT

500 ALAKAWA STREET, #214

HONOLULU, HI 96817-4576

National Minority Small Business Person of the Year

MR. HONG YU – CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

LANCAST, Inc.

12 MURPHY DRIVE

NASHUA, NH 03062

Regional winners – Minority Small Business Person of the Year

REGION ONE (Also NATIONAL MINORITY SMALL BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR)

MR. HONG YU - CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

LANCAST, Inc.

12 MURPHY DRIVE

NASHUA, NH 03062

REGION TWO

MR. KEITH DAVIS - PRESIDENT, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

THE DAVIS GROUP

330 MARKET STREET

CAMDEN, NJ 08102

REGION THREE

MR. JOHN MILLIGAN - PROPRIETOR

JOHN MILLIGAN, CPA

105 NORTH 22ND ST., 2ND FLOOR

PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103

REGION FOUR

SATISH BHATE - PRESIDENT

BHATE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSOCIATION, Inc.

5115 MARYLAND WAY

BRENTWOOD, TN 37027

REGION FIVE

KAMLESH B. TRIVEDI - PRESIDENT

MIAMI VALLEY PUNCH & MANUFACTURING

3425 SUCCESSFUL WAY

DAYTON, OH 45414

REGION SIX

JUDY K. BURLESON - CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

DATATRAC INFORMATION SERVICES, Inc.

9400 NORTH CENTRAL EXPRESSWAY, SUITE 416

DALLAS, TX 75231

REGION SEVEN

DORIS F. HARRIS - PRESIDENT

BRAL ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, Inc.

3811 EAST 75TH TERRACE

KANSAS CITY, MO 64132

REGION EIGHT

DAVID ARNOLD LONG - PRESIDENT

DAVE'S ASPHALT COMPANY

11009 HIGHWAY 789

RIVERTON, WY 82501

REGION NINE

LAWRENCE B. BARRAZA - PRESIDENT

SYMVIONICS, Inc.

3280 E. FOOTHILL BLVD., SUITE 200

PASADENA, CA 91107

REGION TEN

SONAL C. SHAH - PRESIDENT

NORTHWEST SOFTWARE, Inc.

1800 NW 169TH PLACE, SUITE 150-B

BEAVERTON, OR 97006